



# *Promoting Italy through the radio in 1930: an analysis of ENIT radio broadcast in English*

by Maria Elisa Fina  
(Università Ca' Foscari Venezia)

**ABSTRACT:** The aim of this study is to investigate how Italy was promoted in English by means of the *Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT* in 1930. The materials retrieved from the *Archivio Centrale dello Stato* include 110 manuscripts of radio programmes in Italian and 5 manuscripts of radio programmes in English, all broadcast from July to December 1930. The study is focused on the radio programmes in English. The English scripts were annotated by means of *QDA Miner Lite* to identify the main content types drawing on existing classifications. Then, the pieces of news occurring both in the Italian and in the English scripts were compared to check whether literal translation from Italian into English took place or not, as well as to identify linguistic strategies adopted to cater for the needs of English-speaking travellers. In the conclusions, some observations regarding the promotion of Italy in English through the ENIT radio programmes will be provided.

**KEY WORDS:** *Radio Giornale dell'ENIT*; travel radio programmes; content types; ENIT tourist propaganda



## ON THE RADIO GIORNALE DELL'ENIT 1930

During the 1930s, ENIT explored several different means of communication to promote Italy as a modern tourist destination and attract more tourists from abroad. Apart from printed leaflets and brochures, ENIT shared topical tourist information through radio broadcasting, i.e., the *Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*.

In her extensive study on the Italian state tourist propaganda abroad from 1919 to 1943, Syrjämaa (*Visitez*) provides an accurate account of the *Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT* in foreign languages, from its beginning (186) to the available manuscripts (187), to the treated themes (188) and other interesting facts regarding the processes behind ENIT radio broadcasting (for a full account, see pp. 186-189).

Radio stations based in Rome, Milan, Naples, Turin, Genoa, and Bolzano covered the whole of Italy, and the ENIT radio programmes were broadcast daily in Italian, whereas special editions in foreign languages were delivered occasionally (Syrjämaa 186, footnote 2). Over time, broadcasting in foreign languages became more regular and more languages were involved (English, French, German and Spanish). Syrjämaa (187) highlights that although unlike other European countries the radio was not a common apparatus in Italian homes, Italy was probably among the very first countries to utilize the radio for tourist promotion.

The materials that were retrieved from the *Archivio Centrale dello Stato (Radio Giornale dell'ENIT)* include manuscripts of radio programmes from July to December 1930 in Italian, English, French, Spanish and German. Only very few scripts in foreign languages were retrieved by means of archival research. More precisely, the collected data consist of 110 scripts in Italian and 23 scripts in other languages – 5 in English, 7 in French, 5 in Spanish and 5 in German, exactly as reported by Syrjämaa (187). The scripts in Italian are available for each month of the July-December 1930 time span, although not all the scripts were retrieved for each day of the involved months. The scripts available in English are those of July 17th, September 18th, October 16th, November (omitted date in the script) and December (illegible date in the script). Up to date, no recordings are available, nor is any information regarding who materially produced the foreign language versions.

## THE STUDY

The study will focus on the manuscripts in English, and partly in Italian, with the aim to investigate the tourist propaganda by means of the ENIT radio programmes in 1930. Given the huge quantitative mismatch between materials available in Italian and those in English – 110 scripts in Italian vs 5 only in English – it is obviously impossible to carry out a full, detailed comparison of tourism promotion between Italian and English. Thus, the analysis will be organised in two parts. First, the manuscripts in English will be analysed in detail in terms of content, style and linguistic features so as to shed light on the key topics covered by the ENIT tourist propaganda in English. Finally, a number of



pieces of news that were found both in the Italian and in the English manuscripts will be analysed and compared from a translation perspective.

The historical-cultural context in which ENIT's tourism promotion took place has already been thoroughly outlined by Podda in this issue; therefore, we will now focus on the theoretical model adopted for the analysis.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The main theoretical background that will be referred to for the analysis of the materials is the classification of tourist texts proposed by Katan (Translating) and the related classification of content types in audio guides proposed by Fina (Comparing). Katan (Translating) associates the modalities of *vouloir*, *savoir* and *pouvoir faire* outlined by Greimas (*Semantique*) to different types of tourist guidebooks, and for each type identifies the function, the desired effect, the type of language involved, the focus, and example publications (Katan 89): a *vouloir* text aims to make the destination interesting and to create desire in potential travellers by means of persuasive language; a *savoir* text aims to increase knowledge; a *pouvoir* text is focused on practical information enabling travellers to act.

In her investigation of audio guides in Italian and in English, Fina (178) has applied this categorization to content types and has identified sub-types of *savoir*, *pouvoir* and *vouloir*. *Savoir* includes information on the historical, artistic, architectural and cultural features of the city, and aims to increase the visitor's knowledge of the destination. *Pouvoir* refers to visit-related practical information, such as instructions, advice, directions, visiting info, leisure activities. *Vouloir*, which basically responds to the need to present sites so as to raise the visitors' interest, include invitations, persuasive language and, on a stylistic level, the use of a personal style in narration (speaker self-introduction, welcome address, thanking, etc.). Fina's classification (178) will be used in the first part of the analysis to qualitatively investigate the contents of the ENIT radio programmes in English. The audio guide and the radio broadcast are both spoken tourism-related text genres, but they differ in purpose and structure. This notwithstanding, the content types and sub-types identified by Fina in audio guides can be applied to radio broadcasts, as a preliminary reading of the script showed that the two genres tend to share the same content-subtypes, though to different extents.

In the second part of the analysis, when the pieces of news in Italian and in English will be compared from a translation perspective, we will refer to the taxonomy of translation procedures provided by Scarpa (*Traduzione*). Drawing on Newmark (81-88), Pinchuck (188-203), Sager (225-236) and Fawcett (27-50), Scarpa (148-152) identifies eight translation procedures:

- 'transposition': syntactic paraphrase involving a different syntactic structure;
- 'modulation' semantic paraphrase involving a change in perspective;
- 'adaptation': pragmatic paraphrase to solve cultural issues between the ST and the TT;



- 'explicitation': explanation of what is implicit in the ST,
- 'expansion': increase in the number of the constituents of the sentences;
- 'reduction': transformation of a sentence in the ST in a shorter one in the TT, with a reduced number of constituents;
- 'elimination': deletion of unnecessary elements.

When relevant, we will also refer to Pedersen's taxonomy of ECR<sup>1</sup> transfer strategies (76).

## METHODOLOGY

The English scanned scripts were transcribed by means of *Dragon Naturally Speaking*<sup>2</sup> – a speech-to-text software – to obtain analysable Word files. Then, the news headlines appearing in the Italian and the English scripts were listed separately, and the topics of the Italian scripts were grouped by date for each month. The lists of topics in English and in Italian were examined to identify key features characterising the radio programme, the types of content that were more frequently broadcast, and the major 'pull factors', i.e., those factors related to the features and attractions of the destination itself (Klenosky, 'Pull', in Prayag and Ryan 122) influencing when, where, and how people travel (Mill, Morrison, *Tourism System*, in Prayag and Ryan 122).

Then, the scripts in English were annotated by means of *QDA Miner Lite*<sup>3</sup> according to a set of codes based on the classification of content types illustrated in section 2.1, as well as any sub-content or linguistic feature that was deemed worth examining. The codes were grouped under specific labels as follows:

- codes 'savoir', 'vouloir', 'pouvoir' and 'praise for Fascist actions' under the label 'content types';
- codes 'explanation of Italian terms', 'geographic names' and 'measures' under the label 'linguistic features'.

Finally, the list of the headlines appearing in the English scripts were compared to the list containing the headlines of the Italian scripts in order to identify the pieces of news occurring both in the Italian and in the English scripts for subsequent contrastive, translation-oriented analysis. This methodology was adopted in accordance with three research questions:

1. What was the focus, in terms of content, of the radio programmes in English?
2. Were the contents translated literally from Italian into English or were they rewritten/summarised/simplified?

---

<sup>1</sup> Extralinguistic Cultural References.

<sup>2</sup> Developed by Nuance <https://www.nuance.com/it-it/dragon.html>.

To obtain the files in an analysable format, the scripts were read aloud by the author and dictated into *Dragon* using Microsoft Word.

<sup>3</sup> Developed by Provalis <https://provalisresearch.com/products/qualitative-data-analysis-software/freeware/>.



3. What linguistic and translation strategies were adopted to cater for the needs of English-speaking tourists?

## ANALYSIS

First, the results of the software-aided annotation will be presented, shedding light on the types of contents that were more frequently delivered in the English news; finally, the analysis will delve into an Italian vs English comparison from a translation perspective.

## CONTENT TYPES IN THE ENGLISH SCRIPTS

In the scripts of July, September, and October the radio programme begins with a piece of news regarding ENIT's editorial activity that was in progress or recently completed. Expectedly, the focus is on the ENIT publications in foreign languages. In the script of 17th July, the editorial activity of the year 1929 is boasted in quantitative terms:

Excerpt 1 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1930)

EDITORIAL ACTIVITY OF THE ENIT DURING 1929

In the Report presented to the Ministry of Corporations by the President of the Italian State Tourist Department on the activity of this Institution during the year 1929, the following figures show the amount of editorial work carried out by the ENIT: Publications in foreign languages 44 and a half million pages; same publications in four languages over 12 million pages; publications in Italian 6 million pages, namely a total of 63 million pages, which is more than double the amount of published both in 1927 and the 1928.

The amount of material published in foreign languages is quantified in number of pages – with the foreign languages involved being specified – pointing out the sharp increase compared to the years 1927 and 1928. This content could be classified as a particular type of '*pouvoir*', since it contains information that indirectly enables potential foreign travellers to learn about Italy by reading the tourist material produced by the ENIT in foreign languages. In the same piece of news, the following lines are also interesting:

Excerpt 2

The following are some of the publications mentioned in the Report: a booklet in Italian on Tripoli, consisting of 26 pages, a map of the steamship lines and one of Tripoli; up to the present 30.000 copies have been printed in all also in English, French and German. Another booklet is the one on the Adriatic Riviera in English and French and lately issued also in Czechoslovakian [*sic*], German and Hungarian; in a few well illustrated pages tourists can have an exact idea of the attraction offered by the Adriatic coast with regard to summer holidays, Fiume, Trieste, Venice and other climatic and bathing resorts as Abbazia, Grado, Rimini, Pesaro, Ortona are all efficiently described and illustrated.



Some '*vouloir*' intent can also be noticed here: the "well illustrated pages" are mentioned probably to raise further interest in the ENIT tourist material, as potential tourists are plausibly more likely to develop a desire to visit a particular destination when they see pictures depicting its attractions. Furthermore, the ENIT does not miss to mention the publication about Tripoli. This is not surprising, considering that Tripolitania was listed by the economist Angelo Mariotti – who was appointed ENIT director in 1927 (Syrjämaa 160) – among the most promising Italian colonies (Syrjämaa 232) and that Tripoli was considered a symbol of Italian imperial ambitions in North Africa. Indeed, in the script of December 1930, the piece of news "The fifth Tripoli Fair" begins with lines remarking the importance of Tripoli:

Excerpt 3 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, December 1930)

FIFTH TRIPOLI FAIR

The Prime Minister has authorized to hold each year the Tripoli Fair, which has acquired a prominent economical [*sic*] as well as political importance, as it is proven by its four years of experience. By means of its Fair, the importance of Tripoli is growing quite considerably and placing the Colony foremost among all other towns of northers [*sic*] Africa. [...] The general feature of the Fair will not differ much from the past years, except that its "Colonial" characteristic will be set more in evidence, by giving foremost importance to colonial agriculture, land reclamation and colonisation generally.

This excerpt clearly demonstrates an intent to boast about Italian cultural, economic, and military dominance in Libya under the Fascist regime. Tripoli was central to the propaganda, as Mussolini's government invested heavily in infrastructure, urban development, and military installations in Tripoli and other parts of Libya, with Tripoli being modernized according to Fascist architectural principles celebrating Italian achievements. This boasting intent is also visible in the fragment "placing the Colony foremost among all other towns of northers [*sic*] Africa", which not so implicitly remarks the superiority of the colony under the Fascist regime over colonies belonging to other countries (e.g., Tunisia in the same period was under the French dominance).

Generally speaking, the pieces of news that were broadcast cannot always be classified as distinctly '*savoir*', '*pouvoir*' or '*vouloir*', but rather tend to mix aspects of more than one content type. However, by means of the 'Coding retrieval' tool of *QDA Miner Lite*, it was noticed that the most prominent content types are '*pouvoir*' and '*vouloir*'. '*Savoir*' occurs in much fewer occurrences compared to the other two types, and basically consists of brief historical notes or background information about the sites or, in the case of events, brief descriptions of what will take place:

Excerpt 4 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, N. 236, September 18th 1930)

RESTORATION OF THE CATHEDRAL AT PIENZA

Very shortly the Cathedral of Pienza, in Tuscany, will be freed from the scaffolding which has surrounded the beautiful monument during the restoration of the main walls. The latter presented wide and dangerous cracks caused by the age of the building, whilst the foundations required also careful reinforcing in order to save the cathedral from utter decay. The gothic window and other details have been restored by using the same ancient materials. [...]

Excerpt 5 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, November 1930)



NEW HYDROPLANE STATION AT MILAN

[...] It [the new hydroplane station of the “province of Milan”] has been built about 5 miles from Piazza del Duomo. The water surface is about 840.000 [sic] square yards. It is 10 feet deep and along the axial line it is 16 feet deep. The maximum length of the artificial lake is 80.252 [sic] feet and the width even in the centre is 656 feet. [...]

In these excerpts background information is provided about the described sites. It may be reasonably argued, though, that underlying such information is once again a boasting intent. In excerpt 4, the description of the previous conditions of the main walls of the Cathedral of Pienza implicitly highlights the commitment of the Fascist regime in preserving architecture; similarly, in excerpt 5 the grandeur of Fascist works seems to be boasted through the detailed description of the size of the new hydroplane. In terms of linguistic strategies, the imperial system of measurement has been used to describe the size of the hydroplane, as this is the one used in English-speaking countries (see section 3.2 for the translation-oriented analysis).

The following excerpt is also worth analysing:

Excerpt 6 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, November 1930)

VILLA FALCONIERI OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

[...] Villa Falconieri was at one time called Villa Rufina, it was then purchased by Baron Mendelsohn-Bartholdy, who presented it to the ex Kaiser William II. When it passed on to the Italian Government, it was chosen as the seat of the International Institute of Cinematography. The façade of the Palace is one of Borromini's masterpieces. palace is surrounded by a large park with very old trees. Very characteristic and suggestive is the lakelet surrounded by tall cypress trees. This lakelet has been the subject of poems by many poets and novelists, such as the German author Richard Voss, who lived in Villa Falconieri very happily during several years and wrote his novel called: “Villa Falconieri”.

Here brief historical notes about Villa Falconieri provide the listener with some background information about the site; then, the description of the surroundings follows. Although in Fina (178) description has been classified as a type of ‘*savoir*’, a ‘*vouloir*’ intent can be identified in the description of the natural setting of Villa Falconieri (“very characteristic and suggestive is the lakelet surrounded by tall cypress trees”), with the qualifying adjectives “characteristic” and “suggestive” making the place appealing to foreign visitors in the same way as it was in the past to the poets and novelists who were inspired by the lakelet. Another example of ‘*vouloir*’ description is the following:

Excerpt 7 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, July 17th 1930)

THE GRAND HOTEL AND GOLF COURSE AT MENDOLA REOPENED

A few days ago the Grand Hotel at Mendola have been reopened. They are situated in most delightful surroundings of the Trentino, upon the Dolomites and 4200 [sic] feet above sea level and one hour from Bolzano. Mendola is one of the favourite alpine resorts of the upper Trentino, so much so that it is very much sought by lovers of restful holidays in the midst of pine forests. Therefore visitors of the Trentino should not miss to make it a point to stay also at Mendola, where, by the way, there is a very sporty 9 hole Golf Course right in the alpine meadows and forests, which alone should lure all lovers of tricky shots to come where the bracing air is laden with perfume of fir trees.



Again, the practical information – the reopening of the hotel and golf club and their distance from Bolzano – intertwine with a definitely *'vouloir'* description of the Trentino landscape, with expressions like “most delightful surroundings”, “in the midst of pine forests”, “alpine meadows and forests” clearly aimed at presenting a stay at the Grand Hotel as an opportunity to experience the natural beauties offered by the Italian Dolomites. The expression “where the bracing air is laden with perfume of fir trees” appeals to sensory experience to increase desire, thus making the setting more vivid and appealing.

But the *'vouloir'* intent also manifests in other forms. In several instances, interest and desire for a destination or event is sparked by the boasting of their usual success or by anticipation of significant participation:

Excerpt 8 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, December 1930)

NEW ROAD FROM SANREMO TO VENTIMIGLIA

On October 28th the new road which runs all along the coast from Sanremo to the Italian Frontier at Ventimiglia was formally opened.

It is 25 kilometers long and beautiful all the way, one of the best in Europe; it will certainly bring an increase of motoring on the level Italian Riviera.

Excerpt 9 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, December 1930)

RAILWAY FARE REDUCTIONS IN ITALY

Sicily: - During the first six month [*sic*] next year the usual reductions will be granted for the “Sicilian Spring”; these reductions have been very much appreciated by tourist [*sic*] up to the present, as is proven by the great number of travellers who every year take advantage of the reduced fares.

The clauses “it will certainly bring an increase of motoring on the level Italian Riviera” in excerpt 8 and “as is proven by the great number of travellers who every year take advantage of the reduced fares” in excerpt 9 seem to implicitly invite the listeners to be part of the (many) travellers that take part in the event, take advantage of a service, or simply visit a destination.

As far as *'pouvoir'* content is concerned, the most frequent topics concern railway fare reductions, timetables, the construction of new motor-roads, the establishment of new air or train routes, and other useful services for tourists. Here are a few excerpts:

Excerpt 10 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, November 1930)

FAST SERVICE TO SICILY

Since October 1st the passage from Naples to Palermo has become considerably faster. The daily service is effected by motor-ships of the Florio Steamship Company. The new motor-boat sails from Naples at 10.30 p.m. and reaches Palermo at the 9 a.m.; sails from Palermo at 7 p.m. and arrives at Naples at 5:45 a.m.

For the benefit of travellers leaving Rome or coming from the north, there is now an express train leaving Roma at 7.25 p.m., namely after arrival of the Turin, Genoa, Milan and Venice express trains. The Naples fast train arrives at Naples at 10.05 p.m. in time for passengers to catch the night boat to Palermo.

Excerpt 11 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, July 17th 1930)



WHITE SIGNS TO INDICATE WAY TO TOURISTS IN VENICE

In order to make it easy to tourists to find their way in Venice through the intricate maze of islets and bridges, the Commune of Venice has placed special white signs to indicate the way to Museums, to bridges, to the landing piers of the ferry boats on service on the Canal Grande, etc. The system of the white circular signs will be found explained in all Italian guide books of the city, thus henceforth tourists will no longer feel puzzled when roaming through Venice.

As can be seen, detailed information is provided about the departure and arrival times in excerpt 10, while in excerpt 11 the guidebooks of Venice are mentioned in order for listeners to be able to acquire full information about the new way-finding system in Venice.

Finally, several cases of praise for Fascist actions were found. Although references to the Fascist government are not absent, praise itself predominantly revolves around *tangible* services for tourism rather than the specific political ideology. In the following excerpt, the piece of news reports the praise expressed by a foreign magazine:

Excerpt 12 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, N. 236, September 18th 1930)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY OF ROME

[...] The French Magazine points out how under the sure guidance of the "Duce" through a complex of large and impressive works Rome has acquired a new admirable appearance. This study of the French Magazine, with its special number dedicated to Rome deserves being pointed out as a remarkable testimonial of the works that Fascism wanted and could carry out improve the beauty and the grandness of the city of Rome.

This piece of news exploits an article published by a French periodical to boast about the grandeur of the architectural works in Rome and their contribution to making the city an appealing tourist destination. Two clear references to Fascism can be identified ("sure guidance of the 'Duce'" and "the works that Fascism wanted"); however, emphasis is placed on the "complex of large and impressive works" aimed at improving Rome's architectural appearance and, consequently, at increasing interest in foreign visitors. We may argue, though, that covert praise for Fascism as a political ideology is indirectly conveyed through the 'exploitation' of the foreign press.

Other examples are the following:

Excerpt 13 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, November 1930)

FASCIST MILITIA ON RAILWAYS

Very often Touring Associations desire the assistance of the Fascist Railway Militia for the vigilance of railway carriages in which tourist parties leave their luggage during short visits in towns. [...]

Excerpt 14 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, N. 236, September 18th 1930)

THE SALERNO-PAESTUM AUTOSTRADA

[...] The work which is giving employment to over 500 workers, is proceeding with true Fascist speed and will be completed very soon.

Excerpt 15 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, November 1930)

NEW HYDROPLANE STATION AT MILAN

[...] The total expense [for the hydroplane] will amount to 15 million lire.



Praise for Fascism is rather implicit in excerpt 13 and especially in 15: in the previous, the fact that the Fascist Railway Militia is “desired” by Touring Associations is a covert praise for the efficiency of the Fascist militia; in the latter, the fact that the amount of expense has been mentioned could be a covert way of boasting about the Fascist government’s commitment in public utility works. Praise is explicit in excerpt 14, with the expression “with true Fascist speed” emphasising again the government’s efficiency. The same observations as excerpt 12 can be made here. Although verbal reference to Fascism is present, praise emphasises aspects that are strictly relevant to tourism-related services – rather than the political ideology – such as making (foreign) travellers feel safe at the railway station, investing huge amounts of money in transport infrastructure, and ensuring that works run smoothly.

#### ITALIAN VS ENGLISH COMPARISON: TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

We will now compare two pieces of news from a translation perspective in order to identify possible differences between the two versions.

##### EXCERPT 16

RICONOSCIMENTI SVIZZERI SUL MOVIMENTO TURISTICO IN ITALIA (*Radio-Giornale dell’ENIT*, N. 185, 12 agosto 1930-VIII)

Una corrispondenza da Roma al Journal de Genève giunge opportuna a smentire le voci tendenziose diffuse ad arte ad alcuni giornali stranieri sul movimento dei forestieri in Italia.

Dopo aver detto che il fascismo ha affrontato con dignità e con energia il problema turistico l’autorevole quotidiano afferma di aver constatato che nelle zone turistiche della Sicilia, ad esempio, sono sorti a poco a poco, mercé l’impulso del fascismo, numerosi moderni alberghi; e che inoltre il regime fascista ha risolto un problema che sembrava insolubile: quello dei trasporti automobilistici regolari, a prezzi ragionevoli.

SWISS PRESS ON TOURING IN ITALY (*Radio-Giornale dell’ENIT*, English Edition, July 17th 1930)

The Swiss daily “Journal of Genève” has recently received from its Rome correspondent an article which is worth mentioning, particularly at the present time when some false reports are being circulated in certain foreign papers, concerning touring in Italy.

After stating that Fascism has met with dignity and energy the tourist problem, the well-known daily asserts of having noticed that in some districts favoured by tourists, as in Sicily, for instance, numerous modern hotels have sprung up under the impulse of Fascism. The paper states Fascism has solved several problems which seemed insolvable, such as transport by regular motor-car services at reasonable rates.



---

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Il regime di Mussolini – conclude il giornale, – considera dunque il movimento dei turisti da un punto di vista diverso da quello adottato dai precedenti governi, che ne facevano solo una questione di entrate. | “Thus, Mussolini’s regimen - says the paper - considers touring from a different point to that adopted by all preceding governments, which only made touring a question of income”. |
|---|---|

---

The first observation that can be drawn is that the English script seems to be a more or less literal translation of the Italian original script, with minimal changes. In the English headline the concept of “*riconoscimenti*” (‘acknowledgements’) has been deleted, thus toning down the sense of self-praise that is visible in the Italian headline. Instead, with the explicitation “*Swiss press*”, the English headline clarifies that the news piece is focused on what the Swiss press reported about tourism in Italy. Similarly, the adjective “*autorevole*” (‘authoritative’) has been rendered as “well-known” in English. The two adjectives cannot be considered as synonyms, as ‘authoritative’ describes something that “is respected because the person who wrote it knows a lot about the subject”<sup>4</sup>, while the latter refers to something that is “known by a lot of people”<sup>5</sup> – hence not necessarily authoritative. The expression “*movimento turistico*” (‘tourist movement’) has been reduced into “touring”, which also translates “*movimento dei forestieri*” and “*movimento dei turisti*” appearing in the Italian script. Before discussing this aspect from a translation perspective, it should be clarified that “*movimento dei forestieri*” was the expression used to refer to tourism in the Italian language at that time before the word *turismo* came into use (for a full account on this issue, see Syrjämaa 17). Thus, a modulation procedure seems to have occurred, since the Italian expression has been semantically paraphrased based on an effect-cause relationship (the “*movimento turistico*” is the result of people touring). An interesting explicitation (and consequently expansion) has been applied to “*zone turistiche*”, which has been rendered in English as “districts favoured by tourists”, with the verb “favour” suggesting that tourists *prefer* or *choose* those districts over others, which is not implied in the source text. Another explicitation is visible in the segment “from a different point to that adopted by all preceding governments”, in which the indefinite adjective “all” – not present in the ST – has been added, probably to emphasise the superior efficiency and foresight of the Fascist government over the preceding governments. Except for changes in punctuation aimed at avoiding long phrases in English, a reformulation of the first paragraph, and a few minor reductions (e.g., “*dunque*” in the last paragraph has not been translated), the rest of the content – which basically focuses on praising Fascist actions – has been translated literally. Beyond linguistic analysis, the fact that the ENIT radio programmes were used also for counterpropaganda to debunk rumours – as already noted by Syrjämaa (188-189) – is also worth highlighting.

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/authoritative> (last accessed 27th September 2024).

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/well-known> (last accessed 27th September 2024).



We will now move the following excerpt on the golf course in Venice and its English version:

EXCERPT 17

IL CAMPO DI GOLF AL LIDO DI VENEZIA (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, N. 182, 8 agosto 1930-VIII)

Nel prossimo settembre, con una settimana di gare, che si svolgeranno tra il 22 e il 28, verrà inaugurato il campo di golfo recentemente costruito al Lido.

La principale competizione sarà quella per la quale sarà posta in palio la coppa challenge, offerta da S.E. il conte Volpi di Misurata.

Il campo di golfo del lido, situato agli Alberoni, dista 10 minuti di automobile dall'Excelsior Palace Hotel e può essere raggiunto da Venezia in un quarto d'ora di motoscafo. Esso consiste attualmente di nove buche, alle quali in seguito verranno aggiunte altre nove.

Questo campo, dal punto di vista sportivo, non può essere in alcun modo superato, almeno in Italia; situato alle sponde dell'azzurra adriatico, esso è paragonabile soltanto ai più attraenti campi sulle coste della Scozia. Dominato da un'antica fortezza, il campo è sorto sul posto dove esistevano dune sabbiose deserte che vennero magnificamente trasformate e adattate.

NEW GOLF COURSE AT THE VENICE LIDO (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, N. 236, September 18th 1930)

During the present month of September the new Venice Golf Course laid out on the Lido will be officially opened with competitions which will be played from the 22nd to the 28th of this month.

The Golf Course is built at Alberoni, ten minutes drive from the Hotel Excelsior and may be reached from Venice by motor-boat in 15 minutes. It is at present a nine hole[sic] Golf Course, but soon it will be brought up to standard.

From the sporting point of view these links are certainly among the very best in Italy. The Course lies on the shore of the bleu Adriatic sea[sic], amid sand dunes, thus reminding some of the famous Scotch links. An ancient fortress overlooks the course which is well piped to assure good play in mid-summer. The luxurious Club-house is provided with all comfort: shower baths, lounges, bridge-room, American bar, lockers, etc.

In the English version the information regarding the main competition has been omitted, probably as it was deemed not particularly relevant for the English-speaking tourists. But in the last part of the script two additions were made: one regarding the quality of the course ("well-piped to assure good play in mid-summer"), the other regarding the luxury services offered by the clubhouse, which clearly serve as 'pull factors' for attracting tourists. In the last paragraph an interesting reformulation of



content takes place. First of all, in the English version the ranking of the golf course has been downsized from “*non può essere in alcun modo superato, almeno in Italia*” ([this course] cannot be surpassed in any way, at least in Italy) to the more modest “[these links are] certainly among the very best in Italy”: thus, while the expression in the Italian ST implies that the golf course is the best in Italy, its English translation does not actually place the golf club as the top one in Italy. A functional omission also takes place: the information regarding the transformation and adaptation of the “*dune sabbiose*” in the Italian script has been deleted in the English version. The English item corresponding to “*dune sabbiose*” – “sand dunes” – has been moved to the previous sentence and matched to the item “Adriatic sea”, as they both concern the natural landscape surrounding the golf course. In both versions, the landscape is described to associate the golf course to the Scottish links, albeit with a distinction: in the original text praise is more explicit with the adjective “*paragonabile*” (‘comparable’), which is reinforced by the adverb “*soltanto*” (‘only’); in the English text, instead, praise is softened, as the expression “reminding of” implies the concept of evoking something without necessarily including similarity. Furthermore, the expression “thus reminding some of the famous Scotch links” makes the whole concept relevant to listeners who are familiar with the Scotch links. Thus, in the English version the advertised golf course and its surroundings are projected as a home away from home, and the experience of “otherness”, which Urry (*Gaze*) associates to tourist experiences, seems to have been reduced. One last change regards the expression “*in seguito*” (‘later’) at the end of the third paragraph, which in English is translated to “soon”, probably to enhance the portrayal of Fascist efficiency.

Strategies regarding geographic names are worth reporting:

EXCERPT 18

| <i>ITALIAN</i>  | <i>ENGLISH</i>  |
|---|---|
| NUOVA STAZIONE CLIMATICA A SOPRALACROCE<br>( <i>Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT</i> , N. 213, 17<br>settembre 1930-VIII) | NEW CLIMATIC RESORT ON THE ITALIAN RIVIERA<br>( <i>Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT</i> , English Edition,<br>October 16th 1930)      |
| È stata inaugurata a Sopralacroce, presso<br>Borsonasca, una stazione climatica [...]                             | South of Genoa a new climatic health<br>resort has been officially opened near<br>Borsonasca. It is called Sopralacroce [...] |

The producer(s) of the English version seem(s) to have realised that foreign tourists, as ‘outsiders’ (Katan, *Outsider*; Agorni, *Cultural*), might not be familiar with the geographic names of lesser-known sites. However, while the indication “South of Genoa” can be considered a strategy adopted to make the information accessible, the sentence “It is called Sopralacroce” is ambiguous in its formulation, as Sopralacroce is actually the name of the place in which the climatic health resort was built rather than the name of the resort itself.

We will conclude the analysis with the following excerpt, for which the Italian corresponding text was not found, but which is interesting from a translation



perspective as it shows how information regarding geographical names is adapted for foreign visitors:

Excerpt 19 (*Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT*, English Edition, November 1930)

TOURING IN VAL D'AOSTA

The Provincial Committee of Aosta has repeatedly distinguished itself with ingenious means of favouring touring in the Aosta Valley. Indeed Val d'Aosta, which is north of Turin [...].

Here, the name of the *Valle d'Aosta* region has been rendered in English with its direct translation (Perdersen 76) "Aosta Valley". In the following sentence, however, retention (Pedersen 76) takes place, as the Italian name "*Val d'Aosta*" is maintained. This explicitation provides foreign listeners with a sense of the geographical position of Val d'Aosta in relation to Turin, a city that is probably more familiar to them.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis carried out in the previous sections, we will now attempt to answer the research questions posed in section 2.2. Due to the very low number of English scripts available, the following observations cannot be considered as definitive, but should rather be viewed as general assumptions.

Starting with the first research question about the content focus of the news in English, the analysis has shown an apparent preference for '*pouvoir*' content, with a focus on information about works and actions of practical utility over background information regarding, for example, the history of sites ('*savoir*'). '*Vouloir*' content is also used to make the site more appealing by highlighting features of the destination that serve as 'pull factors' for foreign tourists to visit a given city or site. Furthermore, content in which Fascism actions are praised – more or less directly – was often detected. The excerpts analysed, though, show that praise is pretty much based on Fascist actions' impact on tourism rather than their ideological underpinnings. Indeed, rather than conveying an overt endorsement of Fascist ideology, the rhetoric adopted basically highlights the tourism-related improvements that take place under that government. This aspect seems to align with the final observations made by Syrjamaa (308) regarding the role of ideology, which she found to be generally marginal in audiovisual tourist propaganda.

As for the second research question concerning the relationship between the Italian and the English versions of the news from a translation perspective, although due to space constraints only two pieces of news were analysed, some observations can be drawn. The Italian vs English analysis seems to suggest that the pieces of news selected for broadcasting in English are, overall, literal translations of the corresponding pieces of news in Italian. However, some interesting reformulations involving explicitation addition, reductions or omission were noticed. The reformulations do not concern only the syntactic or thematic structure of the sentences but may also – and most interestingly – involve the way specific concepts are delivered in the foreign language. For example, a softening and downsizing of praise was noticed in specific excerpts,



although the systematic nature of this downsizing cannot be confirmed due to the limited number of scripts available for analysis. The omitted content basically includes information that is deemed not relevant to potential foreign tourists, while additions concern 'pull factors' that enhance the appeal of the site and make it worth visiting.

Finally, the linguistic strategies specifically adopted to cater for needs of English-speaking tourists include the use of the imperial system of measurement as opposed to the metric system in Italian (as discussed in excerpt 5), and providing details about the geographical whereabouts of lesser-known sites or cities. Thus, we may reasonably argue that, although no full mediation process takes place, the foreign tourist is recognised as an outsider who might not be familiar with some Italian terms.

It would be interesting to integrate this small study with the analysis of further scripts of the ENIT radio programmes in English in order to carry out a full Italian vs English comparison. While limited in scope, this study contributes to expanding our understanding of the practices related to the ENIT tourist propaganda, complementing Syrjämaa's comprehensive study (*Visitez*) with a linguistic analysis of radio news

## WORKS CITED

Agorni, Mirella. "Cultural Representation Through Translation: an Insider-Outsider Perspective on the Translation of Tourism Promotional Discourse". *Altre Modernità*, 2018, vol. 20, pp. 253-275.

<https://riviste.unimi.it/index.php/AMonline/article/view/10843/10171>. Accessed 15 Apr. 2024.

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri (1860-1987), Gabinetto, Affari Generali, Fascicolo per categoria 1928-30, Fascicolo 3/2-1, Radio-Giornale dell'ENIT 1930.

*Dragon Naturally Speaking*, <https://www.nuance.com/it-it/dragon.html>. Accessed 12 Jan. 2025.

Fawcett, Peter. *Translation and Language. Linguistic Theories Explained*. St. Jerome, 1997.

Fina, Maria Elisa. "Comparing introductory sections in city audio guides in Italian and English". *Languages in Contrast*, vol. 19 no.2, 2019, pp. 173-204.

Greimas, Algirdas Julien. *Sémantique structural*. Larousse, 1966.

Katan, David. "Translating the tourist gaze: from heritage and 'culture' to actual encounter". *Pasos: revista de turismo y patrimonio cultural*, vol.10, n. 4, special issue on *Palabras y cultura en la lengua del turismo*, 2012, pp. 83-95. <https://ojsull.webs.ull.es/index.php/Revista/article/view/2152/580>. Accessed 15 Apr. 2024.

---. "Translating for Outsider Tourists: Cultural Informers Do It Better", *Cultus*, vol., no. 2, 2016, 63-90.

Klenosky, David B. "The "Pull" of Tourism Destinations: A Means-End Investigation." *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 40, 2002, pp. 396-403.



Mill, Robert C. and Morrison, Alastair M. *The Tourism System: An introductory text*. Prentice-Hall, 1985.

Newmark, Peter. *A textbook of Translation*. Prentice Hall, 1988.

Pedersen, Jan. *Subtitling Norms for Television: an Exploration Focussing on Extralinguistic Cultural References*. John Benjamins, 2011.

Pinchuck, Isadore. *Scientific and Technical Translation*. André Deutsch, 1977.

Prayag, Girish and Ryan, Chris. "The relationship between the 'push' and 'pull' factors of a tourist destination: the role of nationality – an analytical qualitative research approach". *Current Issues in Tourism*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2011, pp. 121-143.

QDA Miner Lite <https://provalisresearch.com/products/qualitative-data-analysis-software/freeware/>. Accessed 12 Jan. 2025.

Sager, Juan C. *Language Engineering and Translation Consequences of Automation*. Benjamins, 1994.

Scarpa, Federica. *La traduzione specializzata. Un approccio didattico professionale*. Hoepli, 2008.

Schleifer, Ronald. A. J. *Greimas and the Nature of Meaning: Linguistics, Semiotics and Discourse Theory*. Croom Helm, 1987.

Syrjämaa, Taina. *Visitez l'Italie. Italian state tourist propaganda abroad, 1919-1943: administrative structure and practical realization*. Turun Yliopisto, 1997.

Urry, John. *The Tourist Gaze*. 2nd ed., Sage, 2002.

---

**Maria Elisa Fina** received her PhD in English Linguistics and Intercultural Studies from the University of Salento (Lecce) in 2016 and has been a researcher at Ca' Foscari University of Venice since 2018. Her research interests include English for tourism and cultural heritage promotion, collaborative translation, multimodal analysis. In September 2017 she was awarded the AIA PhD Dissertation Prize by the Association for English Studies in Italy (AIA), thanks to which she published the book *Investigating Effective Audio Guiding. A Multimodal Comparison of the Genre in Italian and English* (2018, Carocci).

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1238-2507>

[mariaelisa.fina@unive.it](mailto:mariaelisa.fina@unive.it)